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EDITORIAL NOTES

It is told of Horace Mann that he walked into the office of a friend in Boston one day and asked him if he "wished to secure the highest seat in the kingdom of heaven; if so," he continued, "you may have it for fifteen hundred dollars." This was the sum needed by Mr. Mann to enable him to purchase a building at Lexington in which he wished to start a normal school. The friend produced the money and the opening of the school with three pupils on July 3, 1839, marked an important epoch in education in the United States. History, however, does not record that Mr. Mann was able to redeem the pledge made to his friend.

**A Mortgage
on Paradise**

Since that time, normal-school training has passed through a number of important stages that correspond to certain epochs in our educational growth. At first it was inevitable that the normal schools should be largely academic. Especially in sections of the country where there were but few or no academies, and before high schools were generally established, the normal schools were compelled to assume the responsibility for non-professional work of a scholastic character. Having their origin in the pre-laboratory age, and their work, therefore, being exceedingly bookish, it was but natural, as the professional end of the curriculum gradually developed, that it, too, should be of a similar kind. It was abstract and theoretical, devoting much attention to detailed methods of teaching subject-matter.

**Stages of
Normal
Training**

No other agency has operated so powerfully as the normal school to stimulate general interest in popular education, and nothing else has done so much to elevate the intelligence of the public as to the necessity of having teachers specially trained for their profession. The time has come, however, when the normal schools and the schools of education must provide a new type of training. Academic training has been amply provided for and it must be, and hereafter it will be, assumed. The past generation has done practically all

**New Type of
Training**

that need be done to place within easy reach of every intelligent teacher whatever it is necessary to know concerning special methods. Within the same period the subjects of psychology and child-study have been thoroughly worked over, and the results have been fully and clearly presented. It is well nigh impossible now to find a teacher who is not an interested student in these subjects and who does not have as a result a proper attitude toward his pupils and his work. This part of the teacher's training, hereafter, will not become of lesser importance, but it will be more and more assumed as a preliminary to the newer training which the public is now demanding. That the times are

**New Type of
Teacher**

ripe for a higher type of trained teacher and for a more thoroughly practical kind of professional training is evidenced by the following list of questions which was sent to me recently by a gentleman just elected to the school board in a suburb of Chicago. That community is evidently trying to find out something about educational values, and this officer made his appeal to expert teachers who might be supposed to be best prepared to make satisfactory answer. The questions are as follows:

1. Would you consider manual training, properly taught and properly related, as important to the best results in other subjects, or as something which might be omitted without detriment to the rest of the work?

**A Teacher's
Examination**

2. Suggest briefly, and in a way intelligible to a layman, your idea of the function of manual training in the curriculum.

3. Has the fact that the country child deals with all sorts of concrete things anything to do with his superiority over the city child in filling important positions? Is manual training any substitute for the experience?

4. If writing, spelling, etc., seemed below par, would you think that the remedy might be looked for in the omission of manual training and the devotion of the time gained to drill in those subjects?

5. Would the fact that a large proportion of the pupils is from well-to-do families and that they do not have occasion to work with their hands, or do not expect to have occupations

requiring manual skill, have any bearing on the need of manual training in the schools?

6. Would you advise the introduction of domestic science into our schools?

7. Are public kindergartens desirable as a part of the school system?

These questions show distinctly what is needed in the teacher. IT IS POWER TO TEACH THE PUBLIC. The ability to teach the children henceforth will be assumed. Hitherto the people have passively submitted to whatever the teachers had to offer; now they have become sufficiently aroused to demand something like a demonstration. That demonstration is the main thing, therefore, which teachers in training must prepare for. That is why we need new curricula in our normal schools, and schools of education. There is not one in existence that gives its pupils half a chance to prepare for such an examination as that set in the foregoing questions. If this is doubted, try the questions on any class of graduating teachers you please; not one in ten nor twenty will be able to convince that community beforehand that it needs either him or his work. These are questions that no mere specialist in manual training can answer.

The new type of training will not be found in a further elaboration and intensification of book study and theoretical discussion; nor will it appear in a further development of

A New Curriculum

specialization as that is now commonly understood. It will be based upon actual "field work" carried on in the community at large. That is, the teachers in training must study, in accordance with a plan analogous to that adopted in a science laboratory, the needs of a community as they manifest themselves in its daily life; they must, in fact, in some way become actual participants in that life. Whereas, heretofore, the school has been considered a part of the community, it is now necessary to make the community a part of the school. No other kind of training will ever equip prospective teachers to answer questions which the public is now asking. The school must go into the service of the community more directly, and the community must open itself up more freely to whatever service the school can render.

Up to the present time the training schools for teachers are all modeled upon the plan and after the ideals of the older educational institutions of an academic type, and these, in their turn, grew out of the cloister. Most of our schools still hark back occasionally to the times when knowledge was chained to the desk of a priest, out of reach of the common people. The training schools for teachers, on the contrary, should be modeled rather upon the plan of the so-called social settlement, and the ideals of the teacher must become more nearly allied to those of the settlement worker. It is a huge mistake to suppose that the chief function of a "settlement" is to furnish slum districts with bath tubs, and that the principles underlying settlement work apply only to the socially submerged. There is as much real need in Hyde Park as there is in the Ghetto for the application of "settlement" principles to social and industrial life in the education of the children. Every school should be so organized as to draw the people together for the purposes of work, of study, and of recreation, as the public library now attracts people who wish to read. To this end, the studios, the workrooms, the laboratories, and the libraries of the schools should be open under the supervision of the teachers, as public libraries are under librarians, to suit the convenience of the people. The settlements in Chicago, following the leadership of Jane Addams, Mary McDowell, and a few others, are fair working-models of what our public schools should be in their relations to the people. A training school for teachers that could place its prospective graduates for at least a year in such intimate relations with community life as the settlements afford would give them the best possible preparation for undertaking with the people the joint task of educating the children. This does not mean, of course, that such training can be acquired only in the reeking and congested districts of the cities. Every locality in city, village, and country, should offer some opportunity for the practical training of teachers in the science and art of working with people. Until this art is thoroughly learned; until the social, the industrial, and the so-called educational interests of the community are organized as a single unity the education of the children will always be defective.

This kind of preliminary preparation for teaching would do much to solve the vexed question as to how teachers are to grow in their work after they have become settled in their profession. Every school should be a center for settlement work of the best type, and the life of the teacher should, and, under such conditions of service, would, naturally expand with the growth of the community. The greatest objection to the teacher's profession, at present, is that he is so hopelessly far removed from doing those things that the community is crying out to have done. His usefulness to the state at present is purely hypothetical. He may do some good in the world, but he can rarely claim the output. Righteous men and women do grow up on the earth, but heredity and every form of accident known in human development impudently filch from the schoolmaster the credit of their virtue. When we get down to the root of the matter, we shall find that it is this fact, more than the salary question, more than that of woman rule, more than all other causes combined, that contributes most to drive self-respecting men and women from the teachers' ranks. To go through a long course of training, ostensibly for public service, only to find that the walls of the schoolroom are to bar him forever from the normal activities of a citizen interested in public life is more than self-respecting human beings in this day will tolerate. The schoolmaster's profession is still dominated by educational traditions of the Middle Ages, when the teacher was a monk who kept himself away from the affairs of the world as things unholy, and when the service of the state was chiefly in the care of the soldiers. No such division of function and shifting of responsibility can now exist. The teacher should take a leader's part in the debate of every question that relates to human welfare. It is only by the most active participation in public affairs that he can keep himself in proper training for the task of teaching the people's children. To give himself and the school over solely, or even mostly, to the petty routine of teaching reading, writing, and ciphering, or the mere details of subject-matter, is to devote himself and his institution to work that can be done almost equally well without either the teacher or the school.

**Training of
Teachers in
Work**

**Teacher Must
Be a Citizen**

When the teacher becomes a direct participant in the public service, he will then be measured and his place will be established according to the methods and standards that are always employed in determining values in human character. When he is once placed in a position of responsibility toward the community, a responsibility that shows itself in some form that the public can understand, then he will take his place according to the law of moral gravitation. The teacher must have the opportunity and then he must be required to win his way to public recognition as every other citizen must do. The various promotion schemes now in vogue are mostly but weak makeshifts prepared to fit unnatural and archaic conditions. The application of the marking system to the gradation of teachers as a means of fixing salaries has proven itself time and again to be just as vicious in its results as it is when applied to the gradation of pupils. Taking all things into account it possesses but little advantage over a system of grading based upon height, or color of the hair. It is equally factitious and unnatural to base salary or position upon length of service alone, that is, merely upon one's ability to draw his breath; for verily, there be many poor and useless teachers who are leather-lunged. When a physician loses too many patients, he is not deprived of his practice because somebody marks him forty-nine per cent.; and when a lawyer's practice falls away it is not because someone has graded him sixty-three—it is moral gravitation that gradually lowers these several servants of the public out of sight. We must come to the same thing with the teachers. No amount of politics or pull will make a man employ a physician or a lawyer whom he believes to be untrustworthy. When the responsibility of the teacher's place in the public service is equally well established, no more will politics or pull get votes for the incompetent teacher. *Moral gravitation is the thing.* If the teaching force were once brought under its sway, it would more quickly and more thoroughly purge the system of incompetents—by exclusion and by general improvement—than any system of legislation that could be devised. The one and only chance that a worthless teacher has for staying in the profession is that which

**Promotion of
Teachers**

**Marking
System**

**Law the
Worthless
Teacher's
Opportunity!**

is afforded him by some law that was placed on the statute books to exclude him. He merely tricks the law and is thereafter safe.

It is a fact of paramount importance which both the public and teachers are apt to overlook, that, in the end, it is of the most vital interest to the teachers themselves that there shall be not only some adequate and fair means of recognizing merit, and of estimating and suitably rewarding actual growing worth, but that there shall be, also, an equally effective plan for barring out those who are unprepared and for purging the school system of incompetent teachers. In the heat of discussion, the public and school authorities sometimes act as though, in their efforts to get rid of incompetent teachers, they cannot count upon the sympathy, much less the active support, of the teaching force. There are teachers, too, whose general behavior may seem to warrant this conclusion. But when in a calm and reasonable frame of mind all parties know that this is not so—that at this particular point there is a mutual interest of greatest import. When proper opportunity is given, therefore, the teachers may be fully relied upon to help work out some plan which will make their profession one that is practically self-purifying. If the responsibility for this were placed upon the teachers, it would at once key up the moral tone of the profession an octave above what it is today or what it ever has been. That is the way the responsibility for the character of the professions works in those of law and medicine. The most implacable foes of poor lawyers and physicians are the members of those professions who are reputable and worthy. The lawyers finally determine who shall be members of the bar, and the physicians determine who shall practice medicine. The responsibility for protecting the public against fraud rests practically upon the professions themselves. The teachers are in no wise so peculiar a people that they cannot or will not take care of their profession in a similar manner, when they have a chance to do so. Mistakes and abuses will occur; but these will be many times outweighed by the moral effect upon the teachers of being compelled to assume the responsibility for the character and work of their brethren.

What the details of such a plan will be must be left to the gradual processes of evolution to determine. It must be anchored in some way, however, to a few fundamental conditions: There must be a constantly rising standard of training, which shall be modified to meet the growing demands of the community. This must be required of teachers before being allowed to enter the profession. The time is ripe for a great advance in this direction. There must be increased opportunities for the school to work out under the direction of the teacher a more intimate relationship with the life of the community. In this way, everyone will be able to get directly at the worth of the teacher. And, finally, there must be a due regard for length of service.

The encouraging feature in the present confusion of educational debate is that the teachers are commencing to think. They have been out of proper relation to the public all these long years, and now they are beginning to realize it. If they will hold steadfastly to the main question at issue until their true position is clearly defined in the public mind, most of the petty annoyances that now dog their footsteps will disappear.

W. S. J.